



Paska (Ukrainian Easter Bread)

Tanya Vahrenkamp

Serving size: 5 - 6 Large Braided Loaves

Ingredients

2 cups scalded hot milk
2 tablespoons salt
1 1/2 cups sugar
2 cups cold water
6 egg yolks (reserve 2 whites for
egg wash)
2 whole eggs
1 zest from large orange
1 juice from zested orange
1/4 cup dry yeast (regular yeast)
1 tablespoon sugar

Directions

Heat milk on low until scalding hot but not boiling. Mix in salt & sugar into hot milk.

In a separate large bowl mix together 2 cups cold water, slightly beaten

eggs, orange zest and juice. Add hot milk mixture, stirring to combine.

Add about 7 cups of flour and stir until smooth (dough will be thin at this point)

1 cup warm water
14-19 cups flour, amount
depends on how humid and how
warm it is
½ cup butter
raisins, (optional)

In a medium bowl (I use a 4 cup measuring cup) mix together 1 cup warm water, sugar and yeast and stir until smooth and puffed up and foamy, about 5-10 minutes. Mix yeast into dough mixture.

Start adding remaining flour a little at a time, stirring flour into the dough with each addition. I start by adding about ½ cup at a time. When dough gets too heavy to stir, start working dough by hand, adding ¼ to ½ cup at a time depending on how sticky it is. Keep adding flour until dough is nice and smooth but not too thick. It will still be somewhat sticky. The more flour you add, the heavier the bread will be.

At this point, add in the melted butter and mix it in, adding a tiny bit of flour at a time if needed. Add just enough to make the dough smooth but not sticky. This is also when you should add in the raisins if using.

Knead dough very well then cover loosely with saran wrap and a tea towel and. Place in a warm place and allow to rise to at least double (about 1 hour), then punch down well, cover again with saran and tea towel and let it rise until doubled again (about 1 more hour).

After the second rising, divide into loaves and place on well greased pans or if you are making free-formed loaves, on a greased cookie sheet.

Cover with a tea towel and let the loaves rise until the pans are full or the loaves are the size and shape you want (usually about ½-1

hour).

While loaves are rising, preheat oven to 375°. When loaves have risen to your desired size, mix 2 reserved egg whites with 1 tsp of water then brush egg wash glaze on each loaf before putting them in the oven. This isn't necessary but it gives the loaves a nice shiny crust. Bake for 25-35 minutes depending on the size of the loaf. When done, your bread loaf should be nicely browned and sound a little hollow when you tap on the loaf with your knuckle.

Notes

Types of loaves – you can make any shape of bread loaf you want. You can use a regular loaf pan if you like or a small round cake pan. Thicker loaves will take longer to bake. Traditional Ukrainian bread is often decorated with braids so I often make a small braid on the top of the loaves I do in pans. My favorite loaves to make are braided loaves – you can do a 3 or 4 strand braid or even a 6 strand French braid.